Mar/Apr 2004 **Vol. 14, No. 2**

THE COLLECTED WORKS

The new 2004 edition of the *Collected Works* will have a few additions which in size are not substantial, but like all of Sri Bhagavan's teachings contain seed kernals of potent food to assuage the spiritual hunger of aspirants.

When Sri Bhagavan was living at the Viruapaksha Cave, Ganapati Muni one day contested Bhagavan's assertion that the Heart was the the most important center. He argued that the brain or *sahasrara* was of more importance since the cells of the brain contained all the tendencies (*vasanas*). Bhagavan refuted this by saying that if that was true a decapitated person would immediately be free from all *vasanas* and attain liberation. He explained futher that the *vasanas* reside in their subtlest form in the Heart and project themselves through the lens of the brain, outward through the five senses onto the screen of the world, thus utilizing his famous 'cinema-show' analogy of creation.

Among those present while this conversation occurred was a school boy, N. S. Aruanchalam. He stood nearby listening intently to the whole conversation and composed nine verses in English describing the scene and gist of the converstion.

About these nine verses the Maharshi said, "When I was in Virupaksha Cave, Nayana came there once with a boy named Arunachala [N. S. Arunachalam Iyer]. He had studied up to the school's final class. While Nayana and I were talking, the boy sat in a bush nearby. He somehow listened to our conversation and composed nine verses in English, giving the gist of what we were talking about. The verses were good and so I translated them into Tamil verses in *Ahaval* metre. They read like the Telugu *Dwipada* metre.[1]"

The following is a prose rendering of Sri Bhagavan's Tamil translation of the nine verses.[2]

It should be noted that the boy identifies Bhagavan as the "Muni" and Kavyakantha as the "Lord".

The Heart and the Brain

1. The Heart of the world (Sri Bhagavan) and the brain of the world (Kavyakantha) began to converse between themselves in the beautiful sacred cave (Virupaksha). All who heard those words at that time remained speechless as pillars.

2. The light of the sun, which exists and shines as the Heart of this earth, illumines the moon in the height, and the moon gives light to the earth;

3. Likewise, Upanishads came from the lips of the *Muni* (Sri Bhagavan), whose place (or abode) is the Heart, addressed to the Lord (Kavykantha), whose place (or abode) is the brain, and were also heard by us as light is received by the earth.

4. I shall compose, though ungrammatically, the truth of every precious word of the pure sacred sayings I heard. If asked, 'Why is it the Truth?' it is merely because it is the Truth.

5. I, the ignorant one, shall prattle that which Sri Ramana, the *Maha-mauni*, lovingly told about the Heart and brain, which is more secret than the meaning of any scripture.

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1. Letters from Sri Ramanasramam, 13th February 1947.
2. The boy's verses were published in the July, 1983 Mountain Path

6. "Just as the pictures in the film, which is placed inside the machine (the cinema projector) are expanded through the magnifying lens and move as very big pictures on the wall,

7. "So the atom-like *vasanas* in the Heart are made gross by the lens of the brain, go out through the eyes, mouth and nose and so on (that is, through the five senses) and appear in space as wonderful pictures of many kinds.

8. "I spent all theses days in the Heart, and when I came from the Heart into the world I found my way to get back into the Heart through the brain, and thereby I also discovered my system (or method)."

9. Thus they finished speaking these pure words, which the Lord (Kavyakantha) then noted in his mind, which all of us understood well, and which I have now quoted.

Na Karmana

"Na Karmana" is the last Vedic chant of both the morning and evening Veda Parayanas at Sri Ramanasramam. It is customary for devotees to stand as it is chanted and then prostrate to the Guru when it concludes. This tradition continues in the Ashram at the Master's samadhi shrine.

In 1938, A. W. Chadwick (Sadhu Arunachala), with the help of some devotees, translated "Na Karmana" into English. Sri Bhagavan corrected and approved his English versification. The Maharshi's explaination of the verse and Chadwick's English versification appears in *Talks With Sri Ramana Maharshi* under the date of 9 - 9 - 1938.

In the Nirvanna Room in Sri Ramanasramam, there is a framed Tamil translation of "Na Karmana" written on two pages. The page on the left, which is in pencil, is Bhagavan's draft; the right page is the same Tamil text but is a fair copy in ink, written by P. N. Swaminathan Iyer. Sri K. Natesan who was there when this translation was written said that Bhagavan had asked him to make a fair copy of his translation in ink, but his former math teacher, P. N. Swaminathan Iyer, who was also there, insisted he must do it. The fair copy in ink is his. The date written at the bottom of the sheet is 10-9-1938, one day after the entry in *Talks*. By these dates we can infer that Bhagavan was probably requested to provide the devotees with a Tamil translation at the time Chadwick translated it into English.

In the new edition of the *Collected Works*, the following translation of Chadwick's has been added.

'Tis not by means of action immortality is gained,
Nor even yet by offspring, nor possession of much gold,
But by renunciation by some it is attained.

The Sages who their senses have all thoroughly controlled
Attain that *Sat* than which high heaven's Supremacy is less,
Which ever doth within the Heart its radiance unfold.

The Adepts by renunciation and one-pointedness
Who have become both pure in heart and who have also known
The certainty of that one Truth Vedanta doth profess,
Attain Self-realization; when ignorance has flown
From body and its cause Maya they'll gain full liberty.

That only as minute *Akash* what has eternal shone,
That is within the Lotus Heart, of every sorrow free,
of the Immaculate Supreme, the seat molecular,
Within the body's inner core, should meditated be.

He verily is Lord Supreme. He is exalted far
Above the Primal Word, which is of Veda first and last;
In which blends the Creative Cause, so merged in one they are.

Apology to Hornets

Also of note is the question-verse by Muruganar that elicited the following verse from Bhagavan:

When I was stung by hornets in revenge
Upon the leg until it was inflamed,
Although it was by chance I stepped upon
Their nest, constructed in a leafy bush;
What kind of mind is his if he does not
At least repent for doing such a wrong?

The "Apology to the Hornets" verse pertains to the incident that occurred during the Virupaksha Cave days. One day Bhagavan was walking around the hill alone, went into the forest not to far from the Pachaiamman Temple, saw a huge banyan-tree leaf drift across his path, which reminded him of the sloka from the *Arunachala Purnam* that tells of the banyan tree under which the Arunagiri Yogi was seated. He started walking in the direction from which the leaf came and saw a large tree on an elevated spot and, while proceeding towards it,

his thigh brushed against a hornets nest. Bhagavan appeared to feel remorse for disturbing the nest and stood still to allow the hornets to sting him to their heart's content. He then left the area and slowly made his way back to Virupaksha Cave by nightfall, with a badly swollen thigh and leg.

After this incident there was much speculation about the giant banyan tree, its location and the Arunagiri Yogi. Bhagavan never again felt inclined to look for the tree, for reasons he never clearly explained. This added even more intrigue to the incident. He also, unsuccessfully, warned others not to go looking for it, and that is another story.

Muruganar seemed puzzled why Bhagavan should feel remorse for an accidental incident, something destined, with no ill will intended. In verse, he questioned Bhagavan thus:

Sighting an overgrown, green-leaved bush, and
When stepping on it and stung by hornets to
have legs swollen,
Venkata, in truth, why was an accidental intrusion
Treated without mercy, just as a wanton
transgression?

This ninth, 2004 edition of the *Collected Works* will contain additional information concering the genesis of other stray verses Bhagavan composed, a few new minor translations of existing works and a number of corrections.

Editions prior to the sixth edition contained the text (introduction and translations from Tamil) of Arthur Osborne's original version.

After thoughtful consideration, beginning with the sixth edition, some of the translations were replaced by those of other eminent devotees, like Prof. K. Swaminathan's, whose scholarship and devotion have endowed them with a deep insight into the subtleties of the Tamil language. However, the bulk of the translations in *Collected Works* still remain Arthur Osborne's.

IMPORTANT REQUEST

ON May 30, 1949, Life Magazine ran a long article on Sri Bhagavan titled "Holy Man". This picture covered two pages and the article was the longest in that issue. Winthrop Seargent wrote the article and Eliot Elisofon (1911-1973) took the photographs.

As a 20th Century photographer, the eminence of Eliot Elisofon's archival collection of photographs has gained tremendous importance. The full store of his work, nearly 73,000 photographs, movies and writings, was donated to the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas in Austin.

Eliot Elisofon spent at least two weeks at Sri Ramanasramam shooting many reels of film of Bhagavan, the Ashram and the surrounding area. We wish to approach this Research Center and investigate what photographs or negatives they are storing and discuss with them the possibility of acquiring digital copies of the negatives, etc. We already have in the Ashram archive about fifteen of his photographs, and know for certain that there are many dozens more.

We are trying to locate any individual on the faculty or staff of the **University of Texas** that would be willing to help us fulfil our intention. There are certain research privileges allowed to faculty members at the Research Center. If anyone can help us in this manner, we ask they contact us first before contacting the Research Center.

Please call or write to either Ravi Ramanan or Dennis Hartel.

Ravi Ramanan in California
E-mail: RaviRamanan@ca.slr.com
Tele: (925) 828-5934

Dennis Hartel of Arunachala Ashrama, NY
E-mail: dennis@arunachala.org
Tele: (718) 575-3215

FORTY VERSES IN PRAISE OF SRI RAMANA

by Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni

(Translated by Dr. Anil K. Sharma and continued from the Jan/Feb 2004 issue)

viśadahasite pūrṇāśāntiḥ sudhākarasodare
sthirapṛthulayoḥ pūrṇā śaktir dṛśor atulārciśoḥ |
hṛdayakamale nityā niṣṭā bahiśca
saratprabhe ramaṇa bhagavan ko vā
maunī samastava bhūtale | |36| |

viśada - bright, splendid, *hasite* - (in) smile, *pūrṇāśāntiḥ* - full of peace, *sudhākara* - moon, *sodare* - related to, kin, *sthira* - frim, steady, *pṛthulayoḥ* - (in) broad, large, *pūrṇāśaktir* - full of power, *dṛśor* - (in) eyes, *atula* - unequalled, *arciśoḥ* - (in) luster, *hṛdaya* - heart, *kamale* - in the lotus, *nityā* - eternal, *niṣṭā* - abidance, *bahiś* - outwards, ca - and, *sarat* - flowing, *prabhe* - splendor, radiance, *ramaṇa* - Ramana, *bhagavan* - Oh Bhagavan, *ko* - who, *vā* - possibly, perhaps, *maunī* - Muni, Sage, *samas* - equal, *tava* - your, *bhūtale* - on the earth

In your moon-like splendid smile peace reigns. Your large broad eyes are steady and unequalled in luster. You are eternally abiding in the lotus of the Heart with your splendor outwardly flowing. Oh Bhagavan Ramana! What Sage on earth is possibly your equal?

devī śaktiriyaṁ dṛśoḥ śritajanadhvānta-
kṣayādhāyinī devī śrīriyam ambujākṣamahiṣī
vaktre sahasracchade |
devī brahmavidhūr iyaṁ vijayate vyāhāragūḍhā
parā viśvācārya mahānubhāva ramaṇa tvāṁ
stautu kaḥ prākṛtaḥ | |37| |

devī - Devi, Mother, *śaktir* - shakti, power, *iyaṁ* - here, *dṛśoḥ* - in (two) eyes, *śrita* - attached to, *jana* - man, *dhvānta* - darkness, ignorance, *kṣaya* - to put an end to, *ādhāyinī* - effecting, *devī* - Devi, *śrīr* - Lakshmi, *iyaṁ* - here, *ambu* - water, *jā* - born in, *akṣa* - eye, *mahiṣī* - wife, *vaktre* - (in) face, *sahasra* - one thousand, *chade* - cover, veil, *devī* - Devi, *brahmavidhūr* - wife of Brahma, Saraswati, *iyaṁ* - here, *vijayate* - victory-causing, *vyāhāra* - utterance, *gūḍhā* - concealed, *parā* - supreme, *viśva* - universe, *acārya* - teacher, *mahā* - great, *anubhāva* - experience, *ramaṇa* - O Ramana! *tvāṁ* - you, *stautu* - may praise, *kaḥ* - who?, *prākṛtaḥ* - ordinary

In your eyes is Devi Shakti, effecting the end of man's ignorance. In your face of a thousand expres-sions is Lakshmi, the wife of the lotus-eyed Vishnu. Concealed in your utterance is victory-causing Saraswati, supreme. Oh universal teacher Ramana of great experience (of Being)! What ordinary man could praise you?

sohaṁ jāto ramaṇabhagavan
pādayoste daviṣṭho yadyapyasmin mahati
samaye śaktilāsye pravṛte |
sūryasyeva jvalatimahaso dūragāṁ nātha
śaktiṁ viśvasyāgryāṁ tava mama mano
vītaduḥkhaṁ tathāpi | |38| |

sohaṁ - I that very person, myself, *jāto* - happened, become, *ramaṇabhagavan* - Oh Bhagavan Ramana, *pādayos* - from (two) feet, *te* - your, *daviṣṭho* - very far away, *yadyapyasmin* - even though in this, *mahati* - great, *samaye* - occasion, time, *śakti* - Shakti, power, *lāsye* - dance, *pravṛte* - begins, *sūryasyeva* - as of the sun, *jvalati* - blazing, *mahaso* - knowledge, *dūragāṁ* - being far, remote, *na* - not, *atha* - now, *śaktiṁ* - Shakti, *viśvasya* of the universe, *agryāṁ* - topmost, *tava* - your, *mama* - mine, *mano* - mind, *vīta* - vanished, *duḥkhaṁ* - sorrow, *tathāpi* - even though

Even though I myself am very far away from your holy feet, Oh Bhagavan Ramana, when on this great occasion the dance of Shakti commences, the knowledge that your power, blazing as the sun and foremost in the universe, is not remote from me, and has caused the sorrow of my mind to vanish.

(To be concluded)

The Collected Works of

Vasishtha Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni

ON Sunday, 22 February, 2004 a formal launching of the first of a 12-volume set of books, containing the *Collected Works of Vasishtha Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni* was released before the Samadhi Shrine of Sri Bhagavan at Sri Ramanasarmam.

The President of Sri Ramanasramam, Sri V. S. Ramanan, presided over the book release and gave the gathered devotees a brief life sketch of Sri K. Natesan, the editor of this colossal undertaking.

Sri K. Natesan was introduced to Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni when just a teenager in the 1920s and became his disciple. He once asked the Muni how he could best learn Sanskrit and was told to continue writing and reciting the Muni's written works as much as possible. Encouraged by Bhagavan Sri Ramana, Sri K. Natasen faithfully followed this advice throughout his life. These simple instructions have also inspired him to collect all the inspired compositions of Ganapati Muni, set them in order and now, in final days of a fruitful life, undertake the editing and publishing of the complete works of this great Vedic seer and saint.

Dr. S. P. Pani, the son-in-law of Sri K. Natesan, gave an enlightening, soulful talk on the deep significance of the Muni's association with Sri Bhagavan, the greatness of the Muni's literary outpourings and the dedication of Sri K. Natesan, his father-in-law, who at ninety years old is as alert and energetic as ever.

From left to right: Sri K. Natesan, Sri K. Chandrashekar, Swami Ramanananda Saraswati, Sri V. S. Ramanan

Inscribed books were presented to devotees by Sri Natesan, and everyone congratulated him on his astounding achievement. The second volume should be printed in a few months and the other ten, which are nearly ready, will be printed as resources become available.

This first 400-page, hardbound volume, containing the famous "Umasahasram," and many other hymns of adoration, printed in Sanskrit, along with the English transliterated text, will be available at Arunachala Ashrama, New York.

For inquires, please call *(718) 575-3215* or email *"ashrama@arunachala.org"*.

The 54th Maha Nirvana Day

You, your family and friends are cordially invited to join us in observing the 54th Maha Nirvana Day of Sri Ramana Maharshi in New York City

Saturday 17 April 2004

11:00 A.M.

at the

Community Center

Hindu Temple Society of North America

(Ganesha Temple)

143-09 Holly Avenue, Flushing, Queens,

NY 11355

The program will include recitations, bhajans, puja, followed by prasad (lunch).

For more information call:

(718) 575-3215

on the web at: www.arunachala.org/Events

KARTIGAI DEEPAM

A. PADMANABHAN SENDS A REPORT

I HAD undertaken this trip to India to attend to a few personal issues that needed my immediate attention. However, I now feel that Bhagavan had brought me here for another agenda: a pilgrimage to Arunachala that coincided with the holy Karthigai Deepam on December 7th.

I left Madras for Tiruvannamalai on the evening of Saturday, December 6, around 8 P.M. I did not have a room reservation for my stay, as Ramanasramam was more than full. My cousin, Mr. Hari, arranged through his wife's niece's friend to get me accommodation in a private home just outside the town. I had no idea of the crowd that I was about to encounter, nor how I was going to have Arunachelswara darshan in the temple.

It was 1 A.M., Sunday when I reached Arunachala. A full moon lit the sky, beaming its rays over the mighty Arunachala Hill. The vibrant Arunachala, the Siva Swarupam (form of Siva), was radiating its splendour and the whole city was vibrant with over one million people gathered to witness the Kartigai Deepam. The roads to the temple and all the temple Gopurams were lit, and the whole town was wearing a great festive mood. I am sure the crowd must have swelled to over 1.5 million as Sunday progressed. I drove to my host's, Mr.Kuppuswamy, residence in Nethaji Nagar, on the Vellore Road. To my surprise Mr.Kuppusway was having the VIP passes to go inside Arunchaleswara Temple to see the Bharani Deepam (arati with five deepams) and the Karthigai Deepam itself. He asked me to get ready immediately to leave for the temple. I felt this was all the grace of Arunachala-Ramana only!

I took a shower at 1:30A.M., had a hot cup of milk and went to Arunachaleswara Temple with Mr. Kuppuswamy's family. Enroute to the Arunachaleswara Temple we saw the Lord Arunachaleswara Himself on procession around the temple, accompanied with all the other temple deities. We walked straight inside the temple and felt like Bhagavan had arranged everything for us!

We waited inside the temple until 3:30AM, when the priests took the 'Bharani Deepam' from inside the sanctum sanctorum of the Lord Arunachaleswara. We had a wonderful darshan of the Bharani Deepam, Lord Arunchaleswara and Unnamalaiamman. There were over 600,000 people inside the temple alone at the early morning Bharani Deepam. After our pradakshan in the second corridor, we left for Mr.Kuppuswamy's home.

From the terrace of Mr.Kuppuswamy's home, we could have a direct uninterrupted view of the holy Arunachala Hill's 180-degree-*panchamuga* view. I prostrated before the Hill of the Holy Beacon, meditated upon Arunachala-Ramana and then Mrs. Kuppuswamy served an excellent South Indian breakfast with coffee.

By around 9 A.M. I left for Ramanasramam. The vibrations in and around the asramam were marvelous. There, seekers can feel the rhythm of the *rutham* and *sathyam* that the "Narayana Suktham" declares. Already the asramam was teeming with pilgrims passing through on *girivalam* of Arunachala. I had the *darshan* at the Mathrubhuteshwara Temple, Bhagavan's shrine and the old meditation hall. I met with Sri V. S. Mani and chatted with him about our small Ramana satsang in Ottawa. We reminisced about the Nova Scotia Ashrama and the Rego Park, New York Ashrama. V. S. Mani and a few other devotees from Madras were keen to hear about the Ramana satsangs in North America. While sitting there, we saw people from all parts of the world, from all walks of life, rich and poor alike, moving about with intense devotion in the asramam. I felt certain there must be *siddhas* among them whose benevolence was falling on us.

Around 11:30 A.M. I had lunch at the asramam. The flowing crowd in the asramam swelled geometrically towards the evening. I was fortunate to attend the Maha Abhishekam at Bhagavan's shrine at the samadhi with "Rudram/Chamakam" Vedic chanting and the Tamil *parayanam* and *bhajans*.

By around 4 P.M. people started taking vantage points to watch the arati outside Bhagavan's shrine and the deepam lit on top of the holy hill. After the usual Veda Parayanam inside Bhagavan's shrine, people who gathered outside started chanting 'Arunachala Siva' before the deepam was lit. Bhagavan's photo was placed in his easy chair, and he appeared to be watching the mighty Arunachala in the same way he did when his mortal body was with us.

By around 5:50 P.M. we could hear drums and fire crackers bursting in the sky, as the mighty Arunachala

was standing like a beacon of light. At 6 P.M., the deepam was lit on the peak of Arunachala. At the same time, with the 'Na Karmana, na prajaya' Vedic chanting, deepam was lit in front of Sri Bhagavan. The asramam reverberated with the 'Arunachala Siva' chanting. This was followed by "Aksharamanamalai," "Arunachala Stuti Panchagam," Ramana bhajans, and arati. I experienced that the Deepam, the mighty Arunachala, Bhagavan and the committed seekers were one and the same.

One strange thing was that all day I did not see the asramam peacocks at all. I thought maybe the crowds had scared them off. But then, just before the deepam was lit at 6 o'clock, right above where Bhagavan's chair was placed and we all gathered to watch, the peacocks appeared and started calling loudly. It was like they were announcing the main event of the whole Kartigai Depeem festival, the lighting of the deepam atop the Arunachala Mountain.

Bhagvan's grace permanently permeates the vicinity, as the ever-present Reality. Every minute I spent there this feeling filled me completely. Every time I go there, the yearning to merge in Him multiplies. He is there in us always as we are in Him only. The deepam on the peak of Arunachala is a living witness to this truth.

By around 8:00 P.M., after the deepa arati, I left the asramam, though the roads were still full with people performing the *girivalam* and there was hardly no space to inch out or in. I returned back to Madras, after profuse thanks to Mr.Kuppuswamy's family at Thiruvannamalai. It is Bhagavan's ever-living grace that gave me this opportunity to be there on the holy Deepam Day

RIGHT AND WRONG

Q.: If it is a question of doing something one considers wrong, and thereby saving some one else from a great wrong, should one do it or refrain from doing it?

Bhagavan: What is right and wrong? There is no standard by which to judge something to be right another to be wrong. Opinions differ according to the nature of the individual and according to the surroundings. They are again ideas and nothing more. Do not worry about them, but get rid of thoughts. If you always remain in the right, then right will prevail in the world.

(The devotee was not satisfied with this answer and asked for further elucidation.)

Sri Bhagavan then pointed out that to see wrong in another is one's own wrong. The discrimination between right and wrong is the origin of sin. One's own sin is reflected outside and the individual in ignorance superimposes it on another. The best course for one is to reach the state in which such discrimination does not arise. Do you see wrong or right in your sleep? Be asleep even in the wakeful state, abide as the Self and remain uncontaminated by what goes on around you. Moreover, however much you might advise them, you hearers may not rectify themselves. Be in the right yourself and remain silent. Your silence will have more effect than your words or deeds. That is the development of will power. Then the world becomes the Kingdom of Heaven, which is within you. —*Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*

Ramana Satsangs

Satsangs with recitations, songs, readings and meditation have been going on in a few places near or in large cities. Some of them are weekly. If you would like to attend any of these, please contact the individuals below for more information.

Boston Area — David & Anna Klegon (617-928-1487 /dklegon@rcn.com)

Atlanta Area — Mangalam Kalyanam (678-423-7324) / smoothcutter@hotmail.com)

Washington, D.C. Area — Prakash & Mamtha Adiseshan (703-502-4892 / adiseshan@worldnet.att.net)

Miami, Ft. Lauderdale Area — David & Janet Rubinson (954-755-4758 / arunahill@earthlink.net)

San Francisco Area — Swaminathan & Sangeeta (510-324-1160 / nachiketas@hotmail.com)

Toronto, Canada — Krishnan & Padma Sastri (905-849-6005 / psastri@hotmail.com)

Ottawa, Canada — Anantha Padmanabhan (613-733-8250 / padmanabhan_ananth@hotmail.com)